

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 (original). An endoscope suitable for autoclaving comprising:

a soft barrier for separating an interior from an exterior,
wherein when said barrier is located at a predetermined position, consideration is taken into a displacement of said barrier between the position of said barrier observed before start of autoclaving and the position thereof observed after completion of the autoclaving during which predetermined pressure is applied and a thermal load is imposed,
whereby a member placed near said barrier is prevented from being broken due to the displacement of said barrier.

2 (original). An endoscope suitable for autoclaving comprising:

a push-button switch including a switch capable of being autoclaved, and a pressing member that shields said switch to keep said switch watertight, includes a presser, can at least partly deform, and can be displaced in a direction in which said switch is pressed,

wherein the initial reference position of the end of said presser of said pressing member observed before start of autoclaving is determined so that a displacement of said end of said presser from the initial reference position, which is derived from deformation of said pressing member and observed after completion of the autoclaving during which pressure is applied and a thermal load is imposed, will be equal to or smaller than a distance between said end of said presser and the initial reference position, said end of said pressure bringing said switch to an on state.

3 (original). An endoscope according to Claim 2, wherein the distance between said end of said presser and said switch observed before start of autoclaving is set to a value that disables said

presser of said pressing member from pressing said switch under pressure applied at a pressurization step of the autoclaving at which at least an autoclave is pressurized.

4 (original). An endoscope according to Claim 2, wherein the distance between said end of said presser and said switch observed before start of autoclaving is set to a value that disables said presser of said pressing member from pressing said switch under pressure released at a decompression step of the autoclaving at which at least an autoclave is decompressed.

5 (original). An endoscope according to Claim 2, wherein the distance between said end of said presser and said switch observed before start of autoclaving is set to a value that disables said presser of said pressing member from pressing said switch due to a difference in pressure occurring between a decompression step of the autoclaving and a pressurization step thereof.

6 (original). An endoscope according to Claim 2, further comprising a linking means that links the interior of said endoscope and the exterior thereof when the external pressure of said endoscope is lower than the internal pressure thereof, and that seals the interior of said endoscope when the external pressure of said endoscope is higher than the internal pressure thereof.

7-15 (cancelled).

16 (new). An endoscope according to Claim 2, wherein said pressing member further comprises a waterproof film that shields said presser and said switch.

17 (new). An endoscope according to Claim 16, wherein a coil spring is engaged with an inner surface of the waterproof film.